



Collaborative Public Workshop

April 26, 2019
9:00am – 6:00pm

Pembroke Hall 305
172 Meeting Street

The **Collaborative Public Workshop** concludes the first offering of the capstone seminar for the Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Humanities and is offered as part of the Cogut Institute's Collaborative Humanities Initiative. The capstone seminar, HMAN 2500: Project Development Workshop, is taught this Spring 2019 by Amanda Anderson, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English, and Tamara Chin, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and East Asian Studies.

Over the course of the semester, participants in the seminar have developed and workshopped a paper central to their core doctoral work. In addition, all participants have performed a number of diverse roles: they have nominated and then introduced a text that was formative for their scholarly development; they have served as first questioners for papers workshopped by others; and they have interviewed one of their peers and prepared a formal introduction of their work. The course provides training for roles that are crucial to the form and quality of academic and public life but that are seldom an object of study and practice in themselves.

The Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Humanities promotes cross-disciplinary work oriented toward the most challenging questions facing humanities research today. Collaboration is built through research practices dedicated to thinking together across disciplines and geographical locations. Participants pursue these forms of inquiry through teaching models and student practices that experiment with group presentations, collaborative online discussions, co-authored seminar papers, and other forms of intellectual partnership. The certificate curriculum comprises three collaborative humanities seminars in the HMAN 2400 series and the Project Development Workshop (HMAN 2500). HMAN 2400 courses are open to all students at the same time as they satisfy a requirement of the certificate.

More information at brown.edu/academics/humanities/curriculum

2019-2020 Collaborative Humanities Seminars

HMAN 2400P	The Idea of the University (Gerhard Richter and Peter Szendy)
HMAN 2400R	Tracing Translations: Artistic Migrations and Reinventions in the Early Modern World (Shahzad Bashir and Holly Shaffer)
HMAN 2400S	Race, Nation, Immigration (Prerna Singh and Michael Steinberg)
HMAN 2400T	Imagining Cities: Early Modern Urban Perspectives (Laura Bass and Evelyn Lincoln)
HMAN 2400U	Italian Thought: Inside and Out (Laura Odello and Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg)
HMAN 2400W	The Visual Frequency of Black Life (Tina Campt)
HMAN 2400X	Premodern Art-Science, or the Work of Knowing in Europe before 1800 (Harold Cook and Tara Nummedal)
HMAN 2500	Project Development Workshop (Timothy Bewes and Brian Meeks)

Program

8:30am – 9:00am Morning Coffee

Workshop moderators: **Amanda Anderson** and **Tamara Chin**

9:00am – 10:45am Panel 1

Aaron Jacobs, *Towards a (Trans)national History of White Supremacy: D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation and the Spectacle of Reenactment*

Commentators: **Corey Robin** and **Melvin Rogers**

Stephen Marsh, *American Variegation: Ralph Ellison, the Problem of Inheritance, and the Black Subject as Universal Subject*

Commentators: **Corey Robin** and **Melvin Rogers**

Pedro Lopes de Almeida, *Travel Writing and Speed in Afro-Luso-Brazilian Scenes*

Commentators: **Rosalind Morris** and **Ellen Rooney**

(Discussion: 10:00am – 10:45am)

10:45 am – 11:00 am Break

11:00am – 12:15pm Panel 2

N'Kosi Oates, *Recovering Baby Suggs: An African-American Storyteller in Toni Morrison's Beloved*

Commentators: **Rosalind Morris** and **Melvin Rogers**

Urszula Rutkowska, *To be Rhetorically Un-Made: Citizenship and Statelessness in Kamila Shamsie's Home Fire*

Commentators: **Rosalind Morris** and **Ellen Rooney**

(Discussion: 11:45am – 12:15pm)

12:15pm – 1:15pm Lunch Break

1:15pm – 2:00pm Talk

Corey Robin, *Invisible Woman: Anita Hill and the Gender of Clarence Thomas's Constitution*

2:00pm – 3:15pm Panel 3

Jan Tabor, *Intrauterine Being and Time — Heidegger, Mysticism, and the Womb*
Commentators: **Corey Robin** and **Ellen Rooney**

Chris DiBona, *An Institutional Approach to Alterity: Hegel With and Against Radical Democracy*

Commentators: **Corey Robin** and **Ellen Rooney**

(Discussion: 2:45pm – 3:15pm)

3:15pm – 3:30pm Break

3:30pm – 4:45pm Panel 4

Irina Kalinka, *Community Despite Connection: An Exploration of the Digital Politics of Optimization and Failure*

Commentators: **Rosalind Morris** and **Melvin Rogers**

Caleb Murray, *Failing Natures: Possibility, Tragedy, and the Temporality of Climate Change*

Commentators: **Rosalind Morris** and **Melvin Rogers**

(Discussion: 4:15pm – 4:45pm)

4:45pm – 5:00pm Break

5:00pm – 5:45pm Talk

Rosalind Morris, *Seeing in the Dark: Philosophizing in the Underground — with Derrida, Kentrige, and the Men who Mine*

Workshop Participants



Christopher DiBona is a scholar working at the intersection of Philosophy of Religion, Philosophical and Religious Ethics, Christian Thought, and Environmental Humanities. He received his BA in Philosophy from Trinity College in 2010, and his MA in Philosophy from Boston College in 2015. At the moment, he is a PhD candidate at the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University. DiBona's research tends to focus on how

religious language, symbols, and narratives can cultivate ethically and politically impactful patterns of modern subjectivity. He has given numerous conference presentations, talks, and responses on these themes, and he has an article forthcoming under the title "A Practice-Based Approach to Human and Divine Singularity: An Emerging Trend in Continental Philosophy and Theology" in the series *Claremont Studies in the Philosophy of Religion, Conference 2018*.

Project: *An Institutional Approach to Alterity: Hegel with and against Radical Democracy*
Emmanuel Levinas inaugurated a radical and living tradition of thinking about the alterity of the Other as fundamentally at odds with forms of determinate conceptual knowing that characterize the institutional apparatuses of Western democracies. Against this backdrop, I argue that reading G.W.F. Hegel's writings and lectures on Christian love alongside his mature political philosophy offers us vital resources for articulating a non-totalizing and hermeneutically sensitive institutional approach to alterity. In his *Early Theological Writings* and mature *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, Hegel describes Christian love as an act and experience of "being at home with oneself in an other." And in his mature *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, we see this conception of love translated and installed as the structural core of the political community in a way that calls upon citizens to empathetically, constructively, and sincerely engage with the lives of sometimes strange and alien peoples with whom they may have substantive disagreements. Rather than holding the tensions that alterity may engender at arm's length or downplaying the significance of the challenges they pose, Hegel's account of Christian love instead encourages different "others" to come into contact, interact, and persist in ways that foster synergistic forms of agonistic conciliation and growth. My task in this essay will therefore be to illuminate the structural workings of love in Hegel's vision of political community and to explicate the democratic upshot of the institutional approach to alterity it suggests.



Aaron Jacobs is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History. His work best fits in the space between cultural and intellectual history, and uses the United States as a point of departure for thinking toward a global history of empire. His dissertation is an attempt to study the imbrications of race, empire, and the politics of history through their representation amidst the rise of mass media culture and the transformation of the modern public sphere in the early twentieth century. It focuses on the reception of D.W. Griffith's notorious film, *The Birth of a Nation*, and particularly its role as a catalyst for the revival of the Ku Klux Klan and its emergence in the 1910s and 1920s as both a reviled as well as widely popular national organization identifiable with a virulent blend of white cultural politics and terroristic violence.

Project: *Towards a (Trans)national History of White Supremacy: D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation and the Spectacle of Reenactment*

My dissertation, entitled "When Lightning Strikes Twice: Cinema, Race, Empire, and the Re-Birth of the Ku Klux Klan," is an attempt to write a transnational history of white supremacy. I examine the public reception of D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, following its initial release in 1915 in the United States. Now infamous for its racist mythologization of the American South during the antebellum period, in its time the film was one of the earliest feature-length narrative films and the first commercial blockbuster. I argue that the film offers an opportunity to study the historical relationship between cultural understandings of racial violence and political sovereignty across a range of geographical scales. By exploring the film's release as simultaneously a regional, national, and international cultural event, I situate it in the context of a series of historical processes already unfolding by the early 20th century. These include the trajectory of racial politics in the Jim Crow South in the aftermath of Postwar Reconstruction; shifting understandings of race, and particularly the idea of "whiteness" as a discrete and knowable category; the rise of the United States as an imperial power; and the emergence of anti-colonial nationalism movements, including white settlers in places like South Africa and Australia attempting to displace traditional European empires. I argue that the film's reception inspires various types of popular attempts at performative reenactment, including but not limited to the Klan's revival, allowing a context in which to explore the politics of Confederate nationalism in translation, through and beyond the American South.



Nechama Juni is a PhD student in the Department of Religious Studies. Juni brings a background in philosophy with her to the study of religion, and her present research is animated by an abiding concern for the relationship between religious observance and ethics. Her dissertation explores the status of Halakha, a body of Jewish law upheld by many

Jewish communities as establishing a basis for right and wrong conduct in everyday life practices. In this project, she undertakes the task of exploring the lifespan of halakhic norms: how are they shaped and changed, how do they in turn shape religious practice, and what kind of gendered subjects do they construct? Guided by scholars in American pragmatic philosophy, feminist theory, and theory of religion, she examines how this legal tradition marks the ethical subject in such a way that has implications for the place of religious practice and gender identity in religious communities.

Project: *Halakhic Woman: On Gender Essentialism in Judaic Studies and the Questions It Has Prevented Us from Asking*

A gender-essentialist picture holds Judaic studies scholars captive. This essentialism has produced notably masculinist approaches to the Jewish story, exemplified in Jacob Katz's infamous statement that history itself has "brushed off" women. But despite the numerous feminist pushbacks and the inroads that feminism has made in various disciplines of Judaic studies, including history, anthropology, and the study of Talmud, feminism in Judaic studies remains indebted to, and perhaps inhibited by, a continuing commitment to gender essentialism. This commitment has a particular hold in studies of traditional Judaism — both its traditional religious texts and the practices those texts describe. It is broadly assumed by scholars of Judaic studies that the traditional practice of Jewish religion — the halakha — upholds and reinscribes the man-male/woman-female gender-sex binary that has dominated Western thinking for so long. These assumptions have posited the masculine halakhic subject as the only kind of Jewish religious subject, and have prevented some key questions from being asked: who is the halakhic woman? How is she interpellated by halakhic texts? How does she inhabit halakhic norms?

I will think through the paradigm of halakhic woman using examples from Jewish legal texts, queer theory, and feminist interventions in religious studies, like Mahmood's *Politics of Piety*.

Recovering women's halakhic subjectivity will challenge reigning assumptions about halakhic texts, Jewish life, and the way religious people inhabit gendered norms.



Irina Kalinka, a third year PhD student in Modern Culture and Media, works on the intersection between political theory and digital media. A traveler between disciplines, occupations, and locales, Kalinka has a BA in Politics & Human Rights from Bard College and an MA in English Literature from Humboldt University. Her previous work experience

includes climate science communication at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies in Potsdam, as well as being an elected county-council representative for the Green Party in Teltow Fläming, Germany. She is currently planning a dissertation project that theorizes how digital platforms might interact with the political field. Her work is animated by a commitment to care for sites of the political — where what it means to be ‘in common’ can itself become the object of contestation. How might the concept of care make us relate differently to our communal aspirations, and how does it open up new possibilities?

Project: *Community Despite Connection: An Exploration of the Digital Politics of Optimization and Failure*

In this project I want to ask what caring for sites of ‘the political’ — where what it means to be ‘in common’ can itself become the object of contestation — might mean in the contemporary digital era. To do so, I explore how social media platforms and data markets envision and institute community and how to be in common with others, to share and partake, is often cast exclusively as the kind of productive work of optimization — of community made operational.

The political, in contrast, is a kind of failure: the foundational and productive failure to sustain a coherent, universally accepted conception of what it means to share a world — the inability to agree, once and for all, on the terms, practices, or spaces proper to its sharing. Analogous to the figure of the ‘bad user,’ this project posits Jean-Luc Nancy’s concept of the ‘inoperative community’ as that instantiation of the political which collectively haunts what is coded as the proper use of platforms of ‘connection’ and ‘togetherness.’

Through a critical interrogation of the trend towards digitally enforced coherence, such an approach shifts the focus towards the importance of counter-currents that not only allow, but emphasize the value of, imperfect or incomplete design, breakdown, glitch, or disruption — not as against community, but as community’s very emergence in digital spaces. If community in Nancy’s sense happens on digital platforms, it happens *despite* — despite the design that regulates and partitions appearance, despite the logic of quantifiable and knowable actors, and despite the homogenization of formats.



Pedro Lopes de Almeida is a fourth-year student in the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies. He obtained a BA in Portuguese Studies and an MA in Literary Theory from the University of Porto. Among his many accomplishments, Lopes de Almeida has worked as a lecturer and published several articles in both English and Portuguese, including most

recently “The Past is a Foreign Photo: Image and Travel Writing in the Benguela Railway Angola, 1920-1930.” His work broadly focuses on questions of travel literature, postcolonial theory, practices of interpretation, and temporalities. In his critical readings of colonial travelogues, he aims to foreground micro-practices, -exchanges, and -encounters and how those might illuminate translocal perspectives, as well as ghostly presences that, read against the grain, intersect with and trouble the imperial gaze of the traveler. For him, travel writing both reflects conflicting perceptions of time and speed and plays a pivotal role in constructing their imaginative geographies.

Project: *Late Coming: Travel Writing and Speed in Afro-Luso-Brazilian Scenes*

My project focuses on the circulation of technologies of acceleration across the Atlantic (especially in Brazil, Angola, and Portugal) in the early 20th century (c. 1900-1940), and the ways in which these circulations and the ensuing narratives (travelogues, photographic collections, travel guides, maps, among others) form a potential archive that questions the timelines of modernization, development, and coloniality. In my approach, I try to foreground scenes of encounters at a very small scale taking place in different geographies in or around railroads. These are not bound together by any strictly causal relationship, yet they feature strikingly coincidental qualities — a mode of relationship that I will propose to frame, tentatively, as *synchronistic*.

In order to examine the ruptures and continuities shaping the relationships and exchanges taking place in these spaces, I will focus on how they interact with shared timelines, opening up new possibilities for the interpretation of colonial, transcolonial, and imperial temporalities through the lens of processes of transnational synchronization and, specifically, how these can be understood against the backdrop of globalization/planetarity. These ideas will be discussed in relation to contexts where speed, acceleration, and energy are the object of dispute among the forces overriding transnational environments.

To do so, I propose a reading of Malcolm Burr’s *A Fossicker in Angola* (1933), Clayton Sedgwick Cooper’s *The Brazilians and Their Country* (1917), and Jan and Cora Gordon’s *A Portuguese Somersault* (1936). By putting these texts side by side, and stressing specific scenes where speed interferes in interpersonal encounters, I hope I can offer new and perhaps unexpected approaches to the problems involving travel literature, peripheric spaces, and processes of environment shaping.



Stephen Marsh is a doctoral candidate in the Department of English at Brown University. After graduating from Yale University with a thesis on “Responsibility, Non-Normative Conscience, and the Critique of the Absolute Other in Jacques Derrida’s *Donner la mort*,” Marsh crossed the Atlantic to pursue a Master’s degree in English and American Studies at Oxford. While there, he wrote on Thomas Pynchon and ideas of history,

community, and war. His writings speak to authors of the American liberal tradition, from Lionel Trilling to Hannah Arendt to Susan Sontag, as well as with Central and Eastern European philosophers. Throughout his work, Marsh consistently addresses the meaning of freedom, the politics of dissent, responsibility, the liberal imagination, and individual life, and also nourishes a keen interest in the autobiographical genre. Marsh’s essay on “Self-Sacrifice in the Autobiographical Narration of David Foster Wallace’s *The Pale King*” was published in *Biography* in 2016.

Project: *American Variegation: Ralph Ellison, the Problem of Inheritance, and the Black Subject as Universal Subject*

This dissertation chapter explores the aesthetic and ethical theories animating the writing of Ralph Ellison, the author of 1952’s *Invisible Man* and, for more than forty years, an essayist on the character of art in America. At present, I intend to argue in the broader dissertation that liberal criticism of this period ought to be taken seriously as a metaphysics all its own, engaging areas of philosophy beyond the structure of government or even the dispositions of human beings. Some of the premises that various liberal thinkers of the period affirm or engage include the belief in the existence of a common (though differently perceived) reality, the project of building a common world, the centrality of existential responsibility to human freedom and, consequently, to human being itself, and the fundamental opposition of liberal to totalitarian epistemology.

In this chapter, I intend to consider the extent to which ethical life is understood to be a condition of the aesthetic in Ellison’s writing, and by extension, American liberal criticism. I will consider the distinctions between universalism and realism in liberal thought, particularly through a paradox Ellison confronts: the need to recognize the necessity of working through America’s racial past in American literature while, simultaneously, affirming the ethical worth of individual identity in the American imagination. I currently believe that Ellison views the American project as a dialectical struggle, wherein change and “variation” lay at the core of the American *ethos*.

Ultimately, I argue, Ellison makes two moves: first, he situates the African-American experience at the existential heart of American experience; second, he situates Emancipation at the heart of Black ontology. As such, Ellison anticipates one of James Baldwin’s most striking insights: that the African-American is the “world’s first genuine Black westerner,” and moreover, the archetype of human spontaneity in general, the free subject in modernity. I intend to develop Ellison’s position in conversation with debates on Black pessimism, and in particular the work of Saidiya Hartman and Stephen Best, of whom Ellison offers a proleptic critique.



Caleb Murray is a fourth-year doctoral candidate in the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University. His interests are wide-ranging, focusing on the intersection of religion and philosophy. From theorizing Simone Weil's environmental ethics to examining the role of religious imagery in Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, his work exemplifies comparative,

humanistic thinking. Among philosophical interlocutors, Murray contemplates American pragmatism as much as Derrida and Butler's theories of precarity alongside kenotic feminist theology. His background reflects his diverse intellectual commitments; he received a BA from Wittenberg University's English department and an MTS in Religion, Literature, and Culture from Harvard Divinity School. Recently, his work has appeared in *Literature and Theology* and the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

Project: *Failing Natures: Possibility, Tragedy, and the Temporality of Climate Change*

What dispositions are reasonable when it comes to climate change? What attitudes, outlooks, or moods should we adopt and cultivate with regard to our affective and cognitive response(s) to climate crisis? Recent scholarship in the environmental humanities could be plotted along an axis of optimism-pessimism; although the terms are far from unified, universal, or even shared, many scholars have considered the place of categories like hope, despair, optimism, pessimism, possibility, progress, loss, and nihilism with regard to climate change. In "Failing Natures," I take up recent work in and around the environmental humanities, suggesting that both optimistic and pessimistic forms of environmental ethics share an underlying, often implicit, determinism or fatalism. Attending to both "religious" (explicitly theological, predominantly Christian) and "secular" environmental ethics — and with special attention to the under-appreciated legacy of existential thought in the American pragmatist tradition — I advocate for foregrounding the tragic nature of ethical theory and praxis, especially when it comes to thinking and acting in the time of climate crisis.



N’Kosi Oates is a PhD student in Africana Studies at Brown University. His research interests lie at the intersection of history, philosophy, and literary and religious studies. Broadly, his research wrestles with issues of African-American history, community formation, and social movements. More specifically, he has written and presented extensively on the Black

Panthers; African-American writers and philosophy; race and urban politics. Before entering the PhD program at Brown University, Oates spent time in politics and publishing, working as a congressional aide and as an editorial intern at *The Nation*. The recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, Oates holds a BA (with distinction) in Political Science and Communication from the University of Delaware and an MAR from Yale Divinity School.

Project: *Recovering Baby Suggs: An African-American Storyteller in Toni Morrison’s Beloved*

In 1987, prolific American writer Toni Morrison published her fifth novel, *Beloved*. Her novel recasts a slave narrative focused on Sethe, a runaway slave who traveled North with her children. When she relocates, the title character “Beloved,” appearing to be a ghost of Sethe’s child who she has killed, returns to life, her family, and the local black Cincinnati community. Baby Suggs is another central person to Sethe’s survival. Many scholars have read her as a religious figure. This paper explores another role available to Baby Suggs — an African-American woman storyteller. By engaging in blending various fields such as literature, religion, black studies, and history, I attempt to recover this role for Baby Suggs and other black women during enslavement and Reconstruction.



Urszula “Ula” Rutkowska is a third-year doctoral student in the Department of English at Brown University. Her research interests include war and its afterlife, violence and nonviolence, and questions related to cosmopolitanism and citizenship. This semester she has taken her interest in the intersection of literature and politics and developed her own course, titled “The Last Eighteen Years: Literature and Conflict

in the 21st Century.” The course covers a wide-array of topics, from the war on terror to the financial crisis and mass incarceration. Rutkowska received her MPhil in Modern and Contemporary English Literature at University of Cambridge and her BA in English and Politics at Brandeis University.

Project: *To be Rhetorically Un-Made: Citizenship and Statelessness in Kamila Shamsie’s Home Fire*

Inspired by recent debates on citizenship in the United Kingdom, I explore in this paper the weaponization of citizenship and the recent move to rhetorically unmake or remake the citizen through modifications such as: “British Passport Holder” or “British of Pakistani Descent.” The revocation of citizenship is thus part of the state’s arsenal of war, and so I will issue a challenge to the citizen as the dominant subject of history. To do so, I turn to *Home Fire* by Kamila Shamsie, a novel that foregrounds the urgency of these debates by exploring the repercussions of revocation and repatriation. Shamsie weighs different models of being in relation to the nation against one another, ultimately settling on a strategy that is determined to take back control of the narrative of identity. Answering Achille Mbembe’s call in the *Critique of Black Reason*, Shamsie seeks to “relaunch the forms of reciprocity without which there can be no progress for humanity” and to simultaneously work against what has been identified by Bonnie Honig as the “conditional order of hospitality.” This paper weighs in on the possibilities of the contemporary novel to emphasize the urgent need to inspect the rhetorical construction of the citizen.



Jan Georg Tabor is a third-year PhD candidate in the Department of German Studies at Brown University. He is interested in philology and philosophy, institutional sociology/history, and the relationship between literature and religion, focusing, specifically, on Mysticism. In the short time he has been at Brown, Tabor has presented on Benjamin, Husserl, Oswald Wiener, Goethe, and Wittgenstein, and has published an article

on Adorno's Resignation-Essay in the 2018 *MLN Special Issue: Inheriting the Frankfurt School*. He has a BA in German and Philosophy and an MA in "Ethics of Textual Cultures" from Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg; he also spent time studying at the Charles University in Prague.

Project: *Intrauterine Being and Time — Heidegger, Mysticism, and the Womb*

Martin Heidegger's interpretation of the human being (*Dasein*) as Being-toward-death can be read as a specific *attitude towards the nature of possibility* as emerging from the workings of an ecstatic temporal microstructure. This *attitude* towards the nature of one's own (temporally induced) possibility is *determined* by the way Heidegger conceptualizes death. Although Heidegger's Anti-Cartesian conception of *Dasein* seems to enable a radical, and in this sense almost mystical, openness towards one's own possibilities, it is still characterized by a moment of *enforcement*, namely the *force* to realize one's own possibility in terms of a *project*. A consequence of this enforcement is the persistence of certain structural aspects such as *protection* (and, by extension, *possession*), a specific notion of *care*, and (a tendency toward a form of 'heroic') *isolation*. This peculiar rendering could be 'recalibrated' if confronted with a different *attitude towards* and an *attentiveness for* the nature of possibility. By drawing on some of Peter Sloterdijk's speculations on mysticism and its connection to (the experience of) intrauterine being in the mother's womb, I will attempt to describe a form of attitude towards one's own possibility that embodies the structural aspects of the intrauterine situation: surrender (in the sense of acceptance), connectedness, and (possessive-less) flow. The critical import of this 'mystical' attitude into the framework of *Being and Time* will take the form of a strategic, supplementary re-reading of the enforcing attitude towards one's own possibility. It will allow for a comparison of different forms of *Thrown-ness* (into *terra firma* vs. into the amniotic flow), of different attitudes towards possibility (determined by death vs. determined by birth), and, in a last step, towards different uses of language (identifying/fixating/possessing language vs. paying attention to and allowing for language).

External Guest Speakers and Commentators



Rosalind C. Morris is Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University. She is the author of *The Returns of Fetishism: Charles de Brosses's The Worship of Fetish Gods and its Legacies* (with Daniel Leonard; University of Chicago Press, 2017), *Accounts and Drawings from Underground: East Rand Proprietary Mines, 1906* (with William Kentridge; University of Chicago Press, 2014) and *In the Place of Origins: Modernity and its Mediums in Northern Thailand* (Duke University Press, 2000). Her research addresses the relationships between value and violence, aesthetics and the political, the sexualization of power and desire, and the history of anthropological thought and social theory. Morris has served as Director of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Associate Director of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and co-editor of *CONNECT: art, politics, theory, culture*.



Corey Robin is Professor of Political Science at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center and author of *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump* (Oxford University Press, 2011, 2018) and *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (Oxford University Press, 2006), which won the Best First Book in Political Theory Award from the American Political Science Association.

Hailed as “the quintessential public intellectual for the digital age” (*The New York Times*), Robin is currently a Cullman Fellow at the New York Public Library, where he is finishing his next book *The Enigma of Clarence Thomas*, which will be out in September.

Brown University Commentators



Melvin Rogers, Associate Professor of Political Science, is the author of *The Undiscovered Dewey: Religion, Morality, and the Ethos of Democracy* (Columbia University Press, 2008) and co-editor of *African American Political Thought: A Collected History* (University of Chicago Press, forthcoming). His articles appear in

major academic journals as well as popular venues such as *Dissent*, *The Atlantic*, *Public Seminar*, and *Boston Review*. Rogers serves as the co-editor of the New Histories of Philosophy series at Oxford University Press. Presently, he is at work on his second single-authored book, *The Darkened Light of Faith: Race, Democracy, and Freedom in African American Political Thought*.



Ellen Rooney is Royce Family Professor of Teaching Excellence in English and Modern Culture and Media. A former director of the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, Rooney serves as Co-Editor of *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* and Associate Editor of *Novel: A forum on fiction*. Her

current research focuses on the intersection of the new formalism emerging in literary studies and contemporary debates on the character and future of reading. She is the author of *Seductive Reasoning: Pluralism as the Problematic of Contemporary Literary Theory* (Cornell University Press, 1989).

Workshop Conveners



Amanda Anderson is Director of the Cogut Institute for the Humanities and Andrew W. Mellon Professor of English and Humanities. Her research focuses on 19th- and 20th-century literature and culture, addressing broad questions of intellectual history, disciplinary formation, and the relations among literature, moral life, and politics. She is the author of *Psyche and Ethos: Moral Life after Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 2018), *Bleak Liberalism* (University of Chicago Press, 2016), *The Way We Argue Now: A Study in the Cultures of Theory* (Princeton University Press, 2006) among other works.



Tamara Chin, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and East Asian Studies, works on comparative approaches to the ancient world and to historical narrative, with a focus on early Chinese texts, the Afro-Eurasian ‘Silk Road,’ and the modern politics of antiquity. Her first book, *Savage Exchange: Han Imperialism, Chinese Literary Style, and the Economic Imagination* (Harvard University Press, 2014) received the Harry Levin Prize of the American Comparative Literature Association.

The Cogut Institute for the Humanities at Brown University advances collaborative research and curricular innovation in the humanities and across the university. Our annual fellowship program brings together faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate and undergraduate fellows to explore work-in-progress in a dynamic workshop setting. In addition to offering the Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Humanities, we provide cutting-edge research seminars for undergraduates. A rich array of programming — conferences, lecture series, and colloquia — enhances the Institute's core research and curricular mission, creating a lively space of inquiry and dialogue that draws in faculty, students, and members of the larger Providence community.

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More information at brown.edu/academics/humanities

